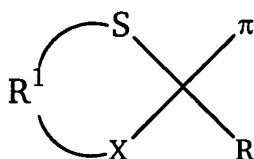


## In the specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraphs:

The initiators of the present invention are useful for functionalizing an anionically polymerized living polymer. These functionalized polymers are formed by reacting a functionalized anionic initiator with certain unsaturated monomers to propagate a polymeric structure. The functionalized polymer may be defined by the formula

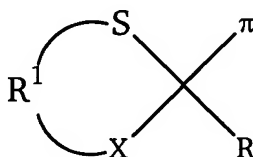


where R is selected from C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>6</sub> trialkyl-silyl groups, C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> alkyl groups, C<sub>4</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> cycloalkyl groups, C<sub>6</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> aryl groups, thienyl, furyl, and pyridyl groups; and R may optionally have attached thereto any of the following functional groups: C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>10</sub> alkyl groups, C<sub>6</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> aryl groups, C<sub>2</sub> to C<sub>10</sub> alkenyl groups, C<sub>3</sub> to C<sub>10</sub> non-terminal alkynyl groups, ethers, *tert*-amines, oxazolines, thiazolines, phosphines, sulfides, silyls, and mixtures thereof; where R<sup>1</sup> is selected from C<sub>2</sub> to C<sub>8</sub> alkylene groups, where X is selected from S, O and NR, where R is defined above, and may optionally have attached thereto any of the above identified functional groups and where π is a polymer chain.

Throughout the formation propagation of the polymer, the polymeric structure is anionic and "living." A new batch of monomer subsequently added to the reaction can add to the living ends of the existing chains and increase the degree of polymerization. A living polymer, therefore, is a polymeric segment having a living or reactive end. Anionic polymerization is further described in George Odian, *Principles of Polymerization*, ch. 5 (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. 1991), or Panek, 94 J. Am. Chem. Soc., 8768 (1972), which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraphs:

The resulting elastomeric compounds when vulcanized using conventional rubber vulcanization conditions exhibit reduced hysteresis properties and are particularly adapted for use as tread rubbers for tires having reduced rolling resistance. Accordingly, the present invention provides a vulcanized rubber composition comprising at least one vulcanized rubber deriving from a vulcanizable rubber defined by the formula



where R is selected from C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>6</sub> trialkyl-silyl groups, C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> alkyl groups, C<sub>4</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> cycloalkyl groups, C<sub>6</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> aryl groups, thienyl, furyl, and pyridyl groups; and R may optionally have attached thereto any of the following functional groups: C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>10</sub> alkyl groups, C<sub>6</sub> to C<sub>20</sub> aryl groups, C<sub>2</sub> to C<sub>10</sub> alkenyl groups, C<sub>3</sub> to C<sub>10</sub> non-terminal alkynyl groups, ethers, *tert*-amines, oxazolines, thiazolines, phosphines, sulfides, silyls, and mixtures thereof; where R<sup>1</sup> is selected from C<sub>2</sub> to C<sub>8</sub> alkylene groups, where X is selected from S, O and NR, where R is defined above, and may optionally have attached thereto any of the above identified functional groups and where  $\pi$  is a polymer chain.